

THE
AERIAL VOYAGE,
A
POEM.

[Price, a British Shilling.]

THE
AERIAL VOYAGE,

A
P O E M.

INSCRIBED TO

RICHARD CROSBIE, Esq.

OH! WHILE ALONG THE STREAM OF TIME, THY NAME
EXPANDED FLIES, AND GATHERS ALL ITS FAME;
SAY, SHALL MY LITTLE BARK ATTENDANT SAIL,
PURSUE THE TRIUMPH, AND PARTAKE THE GALE!

POPE

ÆTHEREAS TENTASSE DOMOS.

D U B L I N:

PRINTED AND SOLD BY R. MARCHBANK, No. 11, DAME STREET.

M,DCC,LXXXV.

THE NEW YORK AGE

M. E. O.

NEW YORK, N. Y.

THE NEW YORK AGE
PUBLISHED WEEKLY
BY THE NEW YORK AGE COMPANY
100 N. Y. ST. N. Y.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY THE NEW YORK AGE COMPANY
100 N. Y. ST. N. Y.

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

THE Public will please to observe, the following little Poem got into the hands of the Editor before the subjoined detail of Mr. CROSBIE's ascent appeared. From it, however, have been since transferred such ideas as could be only had from the ingenious voyager himself. It seems altogether so connected with the Poem, we are inclined to think the Public may wish to have the intire account as communicated by a learned gentleman of our university.

“ The heavy rain and other unfavourable appearances of the weather, on the night preceding the experiment, 19th January 1785, prevented the commencement of the inflation so soon as had been originally proposed ; however, the process began at such an hour as Mr. CROSBIE, and the gentlemen who assisted him, had reason to think, would enable them to gratify the Public about noon. Mr. CROSBIE's eager desire to give the curiosity of the spectators the most immediate satisfaction, induced him to hazard the experiment, as soon as he thought his ascent practicable, even without ballast ; but upon trying the buoyancy of the machine, it

was found necessary to continue the process for some time longer. This disappointment put his firmness to the most severe trial. Satisfied, however, with his own determined purpose of making the experiment succeed, he calmly renewed it, whilst the Public, with that patience and good-nature which characterize Irishmen, far from interrupting the process, seemed less anxious for their own entertainment than his honour. At half after two, all things being in readiness, our adventurer mounted his car with that intrepidity and coolness which cannot be too much admired; when we consider the lateness of the hour, the variableness of the wind, which scarcely continued for two minutes in the same point, and the proximity of the sea. At seventeen minutes before three, with the utmost composure he gave orders by the speaking trumpet, for the rockets to be fired. As soon as the rope was cut, he ascended with majestic solemnity, when, being aware of the circumstances which generally attend the ascent of Balloons, that they become stationary, or sometimes descend again; and animated with a zeal for the success of the experiment, he threw out a large quantity of ballast, when he rapidly shot up into the wide expanse. At this moment his appearance was awful and glorious; when he stood up in his car to salute the Public, which now broke the most profound silence

silence with loud acclamations ; with inexpressible delight, which it has hitherto been the lot of few men to experience, he beheld the multitude and the varied scene below gradually contracting to his view. In three minutes and fifty seconds from the first moment of his ascent, he entered a white cloud, and instantly vanished from the eyes of the spectators ; a few seconds previous to this he had stooped down to adjust the Barometer, which having, as he imagined, completed, he found the Mercury stand at twenty-six inches, by which it appeared to have fallen three inches and fifty-three hundredths. Whilst he was examining this, he heard the explosion of a cannon, a signal agreed upon to inform him when he vanished from the eyes of the spectators, and on looking out, the earth was lost ; and the glorious object that struck his view was the sun, of an oval form, through the refracting clouds. After emerging from this, he descried another range of clouds far above.

“ In this interval it occurred to him to try the effect of his own voice, having seen Mr. Harper’s account of a temporary deafness, which was said to have affected him ; when, to his surprise and delight, it was re-echoed from all the surrounding clouds. Determined now to soar above this second range, he still preserved his *gas* undiminished, and accordingly in a few seconds his ambition was gratified.

gratified. The scene was now astonishing and glorious, the sun in unknown splendour in the expanse of deepest blue, and the clouds rolling beneath his feet. He now examined the Barometer again, and found the screw of the basin not sufficiently released: this being corrected, the mercury fell instantly to near sixteen inches; which sufficiently informed him that he was at a vast height, and had ascended with great rapidity, owing, as is most probable, to the expansion which had now sensibly taken place through the effect of the diminished pressure.

"In compliance with the wishes and advice of his friends, who had requested of him not to push his experiment too far, on account of the lateness of the hour, he opened the valve, the Balloon still continued to ascend, as was indicated by the barometer; at length the mercury became stationary, and he marked it at fifteen inches ninety-nine hundredths, equivalent nearly to two Irish miles in height.

At length the force of ascent was overcome, and he descended for some time slowly, and repassed the upper range of clouds; soon after which he met with a current which carried him to the eastward, as he seemed to be persuaded from the relative position of the

the sun, and his progress over the surface of the lower cloud ; which opinion seems to be verified from hence, that upon his approaching the edge of the cloud, a chasm opened to his view, which discovered the Bay of Dublin beneath. It was not long before he repassed this range of clouds also, and heard the noise of ship-carpenters, and the barking of a ship-dog ; he was at this time in a contrary current of air to the westward, and was carried over the Strand near lord Charlemont's seat at Marino ; where descending fast, the tide being low, he threw out his grappling, the fluke of which being badly wrought, broke with the strain : presently a prodigious concourse of people crowded around him, and laying hold of the rope, he was landed in perfect safety. Those, who were present at his descent, testified their applause by carrying him in his car, with the Balloon floating over it, on their shoulders, to lord Charlemont's house in Dublin, whilst all ranks vied with each other in congratulations on his safety, and admiration of his intrepidity."

So far this accurate relator. Mr. CROSBIE himself further assures us, that his voyage throughout was perfectly smooth, tranquil, and sublime, save in the moments of passing from one current of air to another, when of course the Balloon and Barge must have felt

different tendencies, as acted upon in different directions. Upon the whole it is but truth to affirm, the business of that day was the most awfully magnificent that can engage the human mind ; that in common with the aerial traveller himself, and with every feeling spectator in that immense crowd, we have experienced the most grateful, benevolent, and sublime sensations ; since, while He sees us occupied in search of truth, and the enlargement of science, it would seem that Omnipotence hath scarcely set any limits to the bold enquiries, and the high aspiring views of man. Thus, in the fields of experimental disquisition, Mr. CROSBIE'S dauntless spirit hath secured him unrivalled pre-eminence ; and to this great ornament of our university, our country, of science, and of human nature, a grateful nation will look up for discoveries of the highest import. How far the Legislature of that country, as patrons of science, may feel themselves concerned to promote such discoveries through the aids of public munificence, is with themselves to determine. In all events, while this Gentleman stands so deservedly high in the esteem and admiration of a discerning people, ever ready to patronize *native genius*, may these lines perpetuate the private respect and gratitude of an individual, scarcely known to Mr. CROSBIE, yet a warm admirer of his transcendent merit.

DUBLIN, 24th JAN. 1785.

T H E

A E R I A L V O Y A G E .

AUSUS SE CREDERE COELO.

Th' increasing throngs, from morn to highest noon,
To view th' elancement of the First Balloon,
Th' aerial voyager in triumphal car,
Sublimely traversing the fields of air ;
The strong emotions, and the pangs that rise
In feeling bosoms, as he gains the skies :
These, the mixt prospects of that signal day,
Arrest our wonder, and invite my lay.

Late had we heard of, but as visions vain,
Montgolfiers' * practice on the airy plain ;

B

Blanchard's

* It had been a received notion that the invention of Balloons came from Messrs. Montgolfier, proprietors of a considerable paper manufacture at Annonay in France, better than a year ago. [See Monthly Review, vol. LXIX. p. 552.] It is however well known to many Gentlemen here, that the ingenious Mr. Crossie had started and communicated the idea of Aerial Excursion so early as 1773.

Blanchard's excursions and Lunardi's flight,
 To sceptics still mere phantoms of the night :
 Nor shall we yield to Gallia's fruitful clime,
 This highest species of the *great sublime* ;
 Contending states and rival realms shall own
 Th' *idea* ours, the glory all our own.
 'Twas Melos' bard * first taught mankind to soar
 In fancy's maze, Hibernia teaches more ;
 Since on her present plan, th' excursive muse
 Aims not a flight, but daring man pursues ;
 Yet France to *this sublime* wou'd hold pretence,
 Allow'd us courage, but deny'd us sense † ;
 Till CROSBIE rising, proud Ierne's boy,
 Sprang to his bark, and shot into the sky !

The virgin air, as loth that man assail
 Untasted sweets, had long in ample veil

Wrapt

* Homer.

† Blanchard says, the Irish have hearts but not heads for ballooning.

Wrapt all her charms, until in time less coy,
 She melts in smiles, bright harbingers of joy!
 Not the soft moments of connubial bliss,
 Perhaps more long'd for by the young than this;
 In which the ardent, bridal charioteer,
 Releas'd from earth, shall mix with purer air.

The blushing east at length emits a ray,
 Ætherial prelude of the promis'd day,
 Whose earliest dawn is spread along the shore,
 By the loud drum and louder cannon's roar,
 Whereat, as rous'd to their eternal doom,
 All ages, sexes, withering or in bloom,
 From sleepless couches spring, or balmy rest,
 All to one task, in little time are drest;
 Save where the miser dallies on the theme,
 Of gold unfun'd---the virgin on the dream,
 Of sighs and billet-doux---the beau on lace,
 The cit on gain---the courtier on a *place*;

Save where bright beauty lingers yet, to arm
 Before the glass, and call up ev'ry charm,
 These rites indulg'd, EBLANA op'ning wide
 Her chambers all, emits the mingling tide
 Of native citizens, with all her race
 Of peers and commons, *in* and *out* of place ;
 A motley, strange, and miscellaneous throng,
 These for *reform*, and those against it strong.
 A single day suspends discordant aims,
 Turn'd from low politics to higher themes ;
 All to the garden, garters, rags, and stars,
 On foot, on horse, in hack, or glitt'ring cars ;
 All emulous who first shall gain th' approach,
 Here rolls the chariot, there the blazon'd coach.

But lo ! ere yet the lusty morning dawns,
 The * state's array invests the circling lawns.

Say,

* Two regiments of infantry, a squadron of horse, and part of the train of artillery.

Say, why this trust devolv'd to such a band?
 From you, the sons, the saviours of the land?
 Ye legislators, drive them to that soil
 Of which who eat the bread shou'd share the toil.
 Ye armed sons, 'tis your exclusive care
 From ruffian rudeness to protect *the fair*;
 Yours the *true chivalry*, to shield from harms
 That sex, who pay you with a heav'n of charms!

But lo! the morn advancing on to noon,
 From chymic process fills the vast balloon;
 While mineral air its lab'ring bosom swells,
 And high inflation strange events fortells:
 From zinc and vitriol rises into steam
 The subtile vapour, pure æthereal stream
 Of genial *gas*, whose strong ascending pow'r
 We scarce constrain to wait the destin'd hour.

C

A moment

A moment now, to love, to friendship due,
 Soft from the crowd the anxious chief withdrew ;
 But buskin'd soon, in drawers, satin vest,
 An ample stole, and graceful turban drest,
 Again returns, all dauntless to the charge,
 Smiles on us all, and mounts his airy barge.
 This the dread moment that each feeling fair
 Heaves the soft sigh, and pours the pious pray'r ;
 In this soft moment, CROSBIE, thine the pride
 To chain those stars, that chain the world beside !
 But hark ! responsive to the rockets blaze,
 The cannons thunder fixes ev'ry gaze ;
 Commanding silence all attention draws,
 And leaves an interval of awful pause ;
 Till the last signal to the neighb'ring tree,
 Unties the cord, and sets the hero free.
 Sublimely slow, arising into air
 On the soft wings of female sighs and pray'r,

Ascends

Ascends the bark, attracted to a place
 So full of sweetness, and so full of grace.
 Had fam'd Elijah, who sublimely rode
 On wings of wind, obedient to his god,
 Seen half such beauty on the Jewish plain,
 He'd quit the sky, and ventur'd down again.
 And so the barge had stood, or seem'd to stand,
 Till eas'd of ballast, when he waves his hand,
 Shoots lighter upward with encreasing force,
 His trumpet flourishes, and speeds his course.---
 Ah see, where yonder less'ning to the eye,
 He soars from ken, and gains upon the sky;
 Three minutes obvious to the gazing world,
 The fourth through clouds and airy darkness hurl'd.
 Hail, CROSBIE, hail! to thy research is giv'n,
 T' explore the trackless space 'twixt earth and heav'n;
 In thinner air to try the force of sound,
 Drink back thy words reundulating round;
 All,

All, as the music of concentring spheres,
 From vocal clouds return'd upon thine ears,
 In purer fruits than witty bards devise,
 From bold Ixion's vain, mistaken joys.
 Thine now to mark the sun's elliptic blaze
 Declining west, whose strong refracted rays
 From cloud to cloud, in vivid tints unfold
 Ten thousand splendors, glorious to behold !

Aspiring still above the highest range
 Of amber clouds, if words might tell such change,
 The muse wou'd paint what CROSBIE dares to view,
 One vast expanse of universal blue ;
 Where yon bright orb, th' eternal source is found
 Of light and life, to every world around ;
 Increasing brightness amplifies the scene,
 Where spot nor gust disturbs the blue serene ;
 These the high prospects that expand his soul,
 While clouds and vapours far beneath him roll ;

How

How glorious thus at such a height to move,
 And note those changes science shall improve ;
 To mark the *ratios* with judicious eyes,
 Wherein the varying *lead* shall fall or rise ;
 From which, observ'd, discov'ries yet may flow,
 Friendly to life, and good for man to know.
 'Bove low ambition, thine the bark to steer
 Above the views of *little greatness* here ;
 Thro' purer paths in godlike state to go,
 Tir'd of our schemes and politics below.
 Ye courtiers, view him, not with jaundic'd eyes,
 Rise as ye will, like him ye ne'er shall rise ;
 His deeds have rank'd him with the foremost fam'd,
 Best yours shou'd die unnotic'd and unnam'd !
 Ah, cou'd our voyager from his bark look down
 On all the noise and nonsense of this town ;
 Or join some angel leaning from his sphere,
 To mark the follies that concentrate here ;

Th' increasing vanities of heart and head,
 Where vices take such universal spread !
 How wou'd he grieve our frailties to view,
 Disclaim this world, and veil from what we do !
 In patriot-boast whatever we pretend,
 He'd see, that *self's* our being's aim and end ;
 From whate'er spring our actions seem to flow,
Seductive gold is all the *good* we know ;
 That whatsoe'er we courts or courtiers call,
 We worship Mammon, and we bow to Baal ;
 That tho' in words corruption we disclaim,
 Confirmed slav'ry is our private aim ;
 That in a word, our system is undone,
 Thro' ev'ry vice beneath the *blushing sun*.
 If *this* our state, and this our actions prove,
 How wou'd he wish to hold his course above !
 How wou'd he wish to keep that purer state,
 Nor more associate with the *vulgar great* !

But

But reason whispers, at this awful height,
 To spare some *gas*, and hold a lower flight ;
 Aflant the bosom of the clouds to steer,
 In solemn measure, till the world appear.

See then, where breaking from yon northern sky,
 Again he calls, and fixes ev'ry eye ;
 See, where with greater than Dedalean skill,
 He cleaves the clouds, and mounts, or sinks at will ;
 In eastern sweep to Neptune's dark domain
 Descends excursive, then wheels off again,
 From the ship's clamour, where fierce * Jowler pours
 A louder growl along the winding shores ;
 With better auspice wheels, than that rash pair, †
 Whose first exploit has stamp'd their folly there.

See

* The noise of the shipwrights, and the barking of a dog, were distinctly heard by our intrepid voyager as he cross'd the bay.

† Dedalus and Icarus, the latter of whom has given name to the Icarian sea.

See how he's follow'd by ten thousand eyes,
 As the last nuncio from the bending skies,
 With awful trump, on high commission come,
 To rouse the congregated world to doom!
 Sublimely awful, down the west he goes,
 With greater glory than he first arose;
 Till nearer now, o'er Lemnian shops he rode,
 And recogniz'd the labours of the god *.
 Hail'd by his trump, the finewy cyclops run,
 And, proud, receive Apollo's rightful son;
 Nay, Vulcan's self, in hobbling rapture cries,
 "Welcome, thrice welcome, from our native skies;"
 Puts by the croud, and eagerly arrests
 The painted car, and breaks the awkward jest:
 "Say, what fresh tumult shakes Olympus' hall,
 "If Jove but frown, we gods, I see, must fall;
 "How does my mother, the ætherials, tell?"
 Rejoins the chief: "This nectar's† thence; they're well!

" She

* The noise of the iron-foundery at Ballybough-bridge.

† Producing the cordial from his barge.

" She bade, if chance her banish'd son I found,
 " To pour it thus---and let her health go round."
 So social glides the victor chief along,
 Ey'd as a deity by half the throng ;
 While gath'ring thousands guard his passage home,
 And waft triumphant to the patriot dome *.
 Far into earth while some extend their toil,
 And careful thence extract the shining spoil ;
 Others the wonders of the deep explore,
 In dark recess, or obvious on the shore ;
 Or others run their bold inquiries higher,
 And trace the changes introduc'd by fire † :
 The glory thine, to raise *the airy throne*,
 Midst subject clouds, that element thy own.

These from a muse, but little skill'd to sing,
 Or tune her voice, or elevate her wing ;

E

Save

* Lord Charlemont's.

† Chemical process.

Save when rare merit, CROSBIE, such as thine,
 Inspires the strain, or points the honest line :
 Yet from a muse, indignant to behold
 Meanness incas'd in ermin'd robe or gold,
 That spite of sounding menaces, shou'd dare
 To *grapple crimes*, and shew them as they are ;
 Shou'd e'er *prerogative* on *rights* intrench,
 Or strive to shoulder *justice* from the bench ;
 Or acrimonious *petulance*, to awe
 A high-ton'd nation, call *its* folly, *law* !
 Her equal scorn each *mountebank* shou'd meet,
 That gull'd a court, a senate, or the street ;
 Sick of the *shew* of *justice* and *her scales* * ,
 If, spite of law, *attachment* fill'd the jails ;
 Shou'd *rights* be doom'd to perish, fly, or starve,
 And such sad doom a nation might deserve,

Devoid

* Allusive to the emblems of *Justice* holding her sword and scales.

Devoid of *manlinefs*, to break the chain,
 Assert those rights, and be * *Herself* again;
 She'd turn abhorrent from the venal crew,
 Loath the *rank hour*, and fix her hope on you!
 Borne on thy bark, to fly a wretched shore,
 Where freedom droop'd, and virtue was no more!
 Where all was lapsing to the dismal night
 Of *Brehon-times*, when brutal *force made right* †;
 When poor *Ierne* bled in all her veins,
 'Twixt native fierceness and incurfivè *Danes*;
 When trembling virtue knew not whom to trust,
 But all was rapine, murder, fraud, and luft;
 She'd fly fuch prospects to a land with thee,
 Whose *rights* are facred, and whose people free;
 Whose Saxon fathers *Freedom's temple* rear'd
 On virtue's bafe, a thousand years rever'd;
 And fpite of envy, thousands yet to come
 Shall ftand, 'till loft in Nature's gen'ral doom!

But

* Such as when fhe obtained the renunciation of 6 Geo. I.

† The concise maxim of a crown lawyer, afterwards a judge.

But hold, my friend, a dawn of hope wou'd stay
Our ardent flight, and point the promis'd day,
When Virtue's sons, the guardians of our isle,
Shall yet, ev'n here, erect the *kindred pile*;
Bid arts and science crown the golden year,
And *superstition* vanish into air;
And *commerce*, long in local chains confin'd,
Spread her loose wings, and swell with ev'ry wind!
These are the arts shall make a people blest,
Where none oppresses, and where none's oppress'd;
These *honest arts* shall each real good supply,
And wipe off ev'ry tear from ev'ry eye;
Shall tend to soften ev'ry human woe,
And make this clime a paradise below!
Such pleasing arts increasing splendor give
To CROSBIE's name, and suffer mine to live.

F I N I S.